

## CAPTURED AND INTERNED UKRAINIANS IN ROMANIA, BULGARIA AND TURKEY (1918–1923): A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS IN THE CONTEXT OF UNKNOWN DOCUMENTS OF 1921

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**Abstract:** *Following the rapid collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, the patriotic forces that fought for Ukraine's independence against the Bolshevik and White Guard troops during 1917-1921, lost the military struggle and were interned in various camps in Europe and other countries. The article identifies two groups of Ukrainian military-political emigration formed during 1918-1923. The first group included the troops of interned Ukrainians, particularly in Romania. The second group was formed by the Ukrainian military, captured along with the White Guard troops interned in Bulgaria and Turkey. The authors pointed out that the Ukrainians interned in Romania had better living and working conditions, while the Ukrainian military members of General Wrangel's White Guard Army, held captive in the territories of Bulgaria and Turkey, have suffered greatly from harassment on national and political grounds. The letters published by the authors, written in 1921, which belong to the Ukrainian military in Bulgaria and Turkey and addressed to the officials of the Ukrainian People's Republic, convey their will, conviction, and desire to return to the ranks of the Ukrainian Army and continue the struggle for an independent Ukraine.*

**Keywords:** *Internment, Ukrainians, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Ukrainian People's Republic, Army, correspondence.*

**Rezumat:** *Ucrainenii capturați și deținuți în România, Bulgaria și Turcia (1918-1923): o analiză comparativă în contextul unor documente inedite din anul 1921. În urma prăbușirii rapide a Imperiului Rus, în anul 1917, forțele patriotice care au luptat, în perioada 1917-1921, pentru independența Ucrainei împotriva trupelor bolșevice și a celor aparținând Gărzii Albe, au pierdut în confruntarea lor militară și au fost internate în diferite lagăre din Europa și din alte țări. Articolul identifică două grupuri de emigrație militară-politică ucraineană formate în perioada 1918-1923. Primul grup a inclus trupele ucrainenilor internați, în special, în România. Cel de-al doilea grup a fost format de militarii ucrainenii capturați împreună cu trupele Gărzii Albe internate în Bulgaria și Turcia. Autorii*

*au reliefat că ucrainenii închiși în România au avut condiții mai bune de viață și de muncă, în timp ce militarii ucraineni din Armata Gărzii Albe a generalului Wrangel, ținuți prizonieri pe teritoriile Bulgariei și Turciei, au suferit foarte mult din cauza urii pe motive naționale și politice. În scrisorile publicate de autori (redactate în anul 1921), aparținând militarilor ucraineni din Bulgaria și Turcia și adresate oficialilor Republicii Populare Ucrainene, transpare voința, convingerea și dorința de revenire în rândurile armatei ucrainene și de continuare a luptei pentru o Ucraină independentă.*

**Résumé : Ukrainiens capturés et détenus en Roumanie, Bulgarie et Turquie (1918-1923) : une analyse comparative dans le contexte des documents inédits de l'année 1921.** *A la suite de la chute de l'Empire Russe, l'année 1917, les forces patriotiques qui luttèrent, dans la période 1917-1921, pour l'indépendance de l'Ukraine contre les troupes bolchéviques et contre celles appartenant à la Garde Blanche, ont perdu la confrontation militaire et ont été enfermées en divers camps de l'Europe et d'autres pays. L'article ci-joint identifie deux groupes d'émigration militaire-politique ukrainiens formés dans la période 1918-1923. Le premier groupe inclut les troupes des Ukrainiens enfermés, spécialement, en Roumanie. Le deuxième groupe était formé des militaires ukrainiens capturés ensemble aux troupes de la Garde Blanche internées en Bulgarie et en Turquie. Les auteurs ont mis en relief que les Ukrainiens enfermés en Roumanie eurent des conditions meilleures de vie et de travail, pendant que les militaires ukrainiens de l'Armée de la Garde Blanche du général Wrangel, tenus prisonniers sur les territoires de la Bulgarie et de la Turquie, souffrirent beaucoup à cause de la haine sur motifs nationaux et politiques. Les lettres publiées par les auteurs (rédigées pendant l'année 1921), appartenant aux militaires ukrainiens de Bulgarie et de Turquie et adressées aux officiels de la République Populaire Ukrainienne, résulte la volonté, la conviction et le désir de revenir dans les rangées de l'armée ukrainienne et de continuer la lutte pour une Ukraine indépendante.*

## INTRODUCTION

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national liberation struggle of 1917-1921 is widely celebrated in Ukraine at state level. After the collapse of the Russian Empire, as a result of the February Revolution of 1917, the power of the Ukrainian Central Rada was established in Ukraine (March 4, 1917 – April 29, 1918). After a short time, it was replaced by P. Skoropadskyi's Hetmanate (April 29, 1918 – November 30, 1918) and after its overthrow, the Directory came into force (December 19, 1918 – November 12, 1920), which restored the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR), and since November 12, 1920 the sole government of the UPR was carried out by S. Petliura. During this period, patriotically minded Ukrainians, guided by the idea of autonomy of the Ukrainian republic created their

own army and government, while fighting against the White Guard troops and the Bolsheviks. At the end of the bloody struggle, which ended with the defeat of the Ukrainian national troops, from November 1920 the effective army of the UPR crossed the Zbruch River, and since then Ukrainian troops have been interned and resettled in numerous camps in Europe (Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia). Instead, the White Guard military emigration went to Turkey and Egypt.

Consequently, assessments of events, aspirations and further plans for the lives of Ukrainians who, by virtue of various circumstances, were captured by the White Guard troops and, with them, were interned in Bulgaria and Turkey – were not properly covered by the scientific literature. Considering this, *the purpose* of this scientific study will be the publications of the correspondence of Ukrainian military (captured by the White Army) with the Government of the UPR through its diplomatic missions. These documents (correspondence) were not fully published, which actualizes their significance, since every scientist will be able to assess their meaning and thus makes it impossible to bias the assessments of the events of those times. It is the published documents that will make it possible to compare the situation of the captured Ukrainians in Turkey and Bulgaria with that of the ones interned in the camps of Romania.

As V. Vlasenko points out, these events gave contemporary historians the opportunity to distinguish three waves of military political emigration: the North-Western, Southern and Far Eastern. He emphasizes that the term “Ukrainian political emigration” in historical literature has two meanings. “In a broad sense, the entire emigration between the two world wars is considered political, because many political factors have played a key role. The second meaning is invested by the scholars, when it comes to a politically motivated, ideologically determined, organizationally structured part of emigration that professed the idea of Ukrainian statehood restoring in its various forms.”<sup>1</sup> He notices that “the first wave covers the period from the second half of 1918 to the end of 1919 ... the so-called “French” evacuation from Odessa,” when mostly rich people fled to the Balkans. “The second wave falls on the winter-spring of 1920, when, as a result of defeats of Anton Denikin’s army from Odessa and Novorossiysk, both civilians and Cossacks were evacuated. The third and most massive wave was observed in the autumn of 1920 after the evacuation of the Russian Army of Peter Wrangel from Crimea and the crossing of the

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<sup>1</sup> В. Н. Власенко, *Вторая волна межвоенной украинской политической эмиграции в Румынии (зима-весна 1920 г.)* [The second wave of inter-war Ukrainian political emigration in Romania (winter-spring 1920)], in “Русин” [Rusin], 2014, № 2 (36), с. 270-284, с. 272.

Romanian border by separate units of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR)."<sup>2</sup> Such a classification is not untrue and allows us to assume that the subject of the investigation is primarily concerned with the interned and captured Ukrainians, who entered the territory of Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey in the third wave.

### HISTORIOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

The subject of national liberation struggles in Ukraine was properly analysed in historical science. The available historiography allows to distinguish both broad-vector works, which have general assessments of those events, as well as special historical studies devoted to specific aspects of the problem that received attention. First of all, the conditions of the struggle of Ukrainian troops for independent statehood were deeply analysed by historian Ya. Tynchenko<sup>3</sup>, which laid the foundations for its in-depth study.

Conditions of living and political preferences of interned Ukrainians in Polish camps of Kalisz, Lancut, Shypiorno, Oleksandrov, Pikulice are covered by T. Sharavara<sup>4</sup> in the context of activities of cultural and educational societies formed by internees. The historian argues that despite the complex moral condition of the military, they have made significant efforts to organize their life, their educational activities and have not lost hope for a further struggle for the restoration of the Ukrainian state.

A separate informative group of works was created by historian I. Sribniak, who analysed the features of internment of troops in the Balkans. In particular, he deeply highlighted military training, the organization of cultural work in the camps of Braşov, Giurgiu, Oradea Mare, Făgăraş, as well as the issue of cooperation with the Romanian authorities for the employment of Ukrainians outside the camps for the internees.<sup>5</sup> The peculiarities of the existence of the white Russian

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Я. Тинченко, *Офіцерський корпус Армії УНР (1917–1921 рр.)* [Officer Corps of the Army of the UPR (1917–1921)], in <http://coollib.com/b/178326>

<sup>4</sup> Т. О. Шаравара, *Випускники Віленського військового піхотного училища у боротьбі за українську державність (1917–1923 рр.): монографія* [Graduates of the Vilna Military Infantry School in the Struggle for Ukrainian Statehood (1917–1923): monograph], Київ: Видавництво Ліра-К, 2016, 216 с.

<sup>5</sup> І. В. Срібняк, *Початки української військової еміграції на Балканах (1921–1923 рр.)* [The beginnings of Ukrainian military emigration in the Balkans (1921–1923)], in "Військово-історичний альманах" [Military Historical Almanac], 2006, Число 2, с. 45–55, in [http://militarist.milua.org/via/VIA\\_13-sribnyak.pdf](http://militarist.milua.org/via/VIA_13-sribnyak.pdf); І. В. Срібняк, *Обеззброєна*

emigration were covered in the documentary digest “Russian Military Expatriation of the 20’s and 40’s...”<sup>6</sup> The level of organization of Ukrainian emigration in Turkey in the 1920’s is described in the Ukrainian diary “Freedom”.<sup>7</sup>

### THE DESTINY OF UKRAINIAN INTERNED MILITARY

Taking into account the substantial historiography of the issue, there are grounds for dividing the Ukrainian interned military into two groups. The first one consists of those who, since the beginning of the national liberation struggle, were part of the UPR troops and got into internment within the Ukrainian military units. The second one consists of those who find themselves in the interned units of the White Guard troops, on their own, or having the status of their captives. The destiny of interned Ukrainian military in Romania seemed better than the destiny of the Ukrainians, who were captured by the White Guard troops in the third wave of emigration.

V. Vlasenko<sup>8</sup> and I. Sribniak<sup>9</sup> note that about 500 thousand of Ukrainians were captives on the territory of European countries at the beginning of 1919. For the most part, these are the military of the second wave of emigration that came to the Balkans with the Wrangel troops. M. Jovanovyich points out that they often

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*але не скорена: Інтернована Армія УНР у таборах Польщі й Румунії (1921–1924 рр.)* [Disarmed but not defeated: Interwar Army of the UPR in the camps of Poland and Romania (1921–1924)], Київ: Видавництво імені Олени Теліги, 1997, 187 с.

<sup>6</sup> *Русская военная эмиграция 20-х – 40-х годов. Документы и материалы* [Russian military emigration of the 20’s – 40’s. Documents and materials]. Москва: Гея; Триада-Х, Триада-Ф, 1998-2002: Том 1. *Как начиналось изгнание. 1920 –1922 гг. Книга первая. Исход* [How the exile began. 1920-1922 The first book. Exodus], Москва: Гея, 1998, 432 с.; *Книга вторая. На чужбине*. [The second book. In a foreign land], Москва: Гея, 1998, 752 с.; Том 2. *Несбывшиеся надежды* [Unfulfilled hopes], Москва: Триада-Х, 2001, 484 с.; Том 3. *Возвращение* [Return], Москва: Триада-Ф, 2002, 576 с.

<sup>7</sup> *Українське життя в Туреччині* [Ukrainian life in Turkey], in “Свобода” [Freedom], 1935, 9 серпня, № 184, с. 3.: <http://www.svoboda-news.com/arxiv/pdf/1935/Svoboda-1935-184.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> В. Н. Власенко, *Формирование украинской политической эмиграции в Румынии в межвоенный период (первая волна)* [Formation of the Ukrainian political emigration in Romania in the interwar period (the first wave)], in „Русин” [Rusin], 2014, № 1 (35), с. 105-120, С. 108.

<sup>9</sup> І. Срібняк, *Полонені та інтерновані вояки-українці в Румунії (1919–1923 рр.)* [Captured and interned warriors-Ukrainians in Romania (1919-1923)], in “Пам’ять століть” [The memory of centuries], Київ, 1998, № 5, с. 116.

lived in transit camps for half a year.<sup>10</sup>

In Romania, the diplomatic corps represented by M. Galagan, a former member of the Ukrainian Central Rada, provided significant support to Ukrainians. Since October 1918, the Ukrainian mission in Bucharest was led by V. Dashkevych-Gorbatskyi, a supporter and participant of the White Movement. Professor M. Dogel, Colonel P. Nevodovskyi, writer V. Mayevskyi and others worked actively as part of the mission. The Consul General in Bucharest was K. Chebotarenko, the Vice Consul in Galați – the sotnyk Spyrydon Beletskyi. With the restoration of the UPR at the time of the Directory, the diplomatic corps also changed. In particular, “in January 1919, the Extraordinary Diplomatic Mission of the Ukrainian People’s Republic arrived in Bucharest, led by an engineer and journalist Yu. Gasenko and many others.”<sup>11</sup> Since June 1919, the mission in Romania was led by a scientist-agronomist, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the UPR K. Matsiievych. At the same time, the military mission of the UPR also acted, and it was reorganized from February 1920 into a department under the Extraordinary Diplomatic Mission. Its work was directed by historian and diplomat S. Delvig. At the same time, the mission of the Red Cross in the Balkans was led by the historian and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian State – D. Doroshenko.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the work to support the captured Ukrainians was arranged. At the end of January 1920, the mission was liquidated. In the territory of Romania at the beginning of 1920 there were many Ukrainian military members of the First World War.<sup>13</sup> Thus, subsequently their ranks were replenished with Ukrainians who fought for Ukrainian statehood as part of the UPR Active Army.

By the spring of 1919, up to 20 thousand people immigrated to the Turkish territory and from there to other countries. Romania has the largest number of refugees. In April 1919, in the south of Ukraine, part of the UPR Army was cut off from the main forces, and the Zaporizhzhya Corps was among them, as well as parts of the South-Eastern Group and the South Eastern Front group, retreated to the Romanian border. They crossed the Dniester during the bloody battles with the Bolsheviks, and later part of the troops returned to Galicia, and the wounded were left in Chișinău. Refugees arrived to Romania from everywhere. On December 28, 1920, the Ukrainian

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<sup>10</sup> М. Йованович, *Обзор переселения русских беженцев на Балканы* [Review of the resettlement of Russian refugees to the Balkans], in Е. М. Миронова (ред.), *Русский исход* [Russian exodus], СПб., 2004, с. 170–171.

<sup>11</sup> ЦДАВО [Central State Archive of Higher Authorities and Administration of Ukraine], Fond 3696, List 2, File 215, P. 8–9.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> І. Срібняк, *op. cit.*, с. 116.

units were disarmed and resettled in camps for the interned<sup>14</sup>.

The Government of the UPR provided funds to support citizens and interned troops. In general, according to studies of historians, interned Ukrainian military in Romanian camps settled down in camps in Braşov, Burdujeni, and other<sup>15</sup>.

Ukrainian diplomats made efforts to increase the number of Ukrainian Cossacks in Romania gradually, as the situation there was much more favourable, and it was primarily related to the moral climate. The Romanian authorities contributed to the employment of Ukrainians outside the camps. Consequently, in October 1921, in the Romanian camps “Făgăraş” and “Braşov” there were 238 people, besides 1100 interned for “free works” (in Giurgiu – 750, in Bucharest and in the suburbs – 152, and in other places – 200 Cossacks in small groups). As K. Matsiievych evaluated the situation, “the conditions for receiving wages, food and dwellings were quite good, so that both the Cossacks (private, – authors’ refinements) and the starshina (military Cossack rank) have the opportunity to save money, to dress and to some extent satisfy their cultural needs”<sup>16</sup>. In addition, the mission fully assisted in organizing daily life, cultural and educational activities, contributed to the delivery of books, magazines and even the organization of cooperatives. K. Matsiievych, the Head of UPR Diplomatic Mission, pointed out that some incidents occurred; the moral status of some Cossacks was reduced<sup>17</sup>. Professor I. Sribniak emphasizes that K. Matsiievych also reported that all this time the mission was the head of the guardianship of interned and runaway (fugitives), but the political and economic situation in Romania had changed, and the Ukrainian diplomats came to the conclusion that it was expedient to change that state of affairs. It was necessary to “reform this case and organize it on the principles of self-help and use for this other charitable institutions”. As a consequence, a community (community-assistance) committee and the Red Cross Committee were to be set up in Romania in a few weeks, which would have had to take over the care of internees. Subsequently, on the initiative of the mentioned committee, an entire range of donations was organized, including for the interned in Poland, for the “Native school”, military invalids, orphans and sick women in camps and for other charitable purposes<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1075, List 2, File 474, P. 49.

<sup>15</sup> В. Н. Власенко, *op. cit.*, с. 105-120.

<sup>16</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1075, List 2, File 827, P. 56.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> І. Срібняк, *Українці в Бессарабії та Румунії 1921-1923 рр. (Таборове та позатаборове повсякдення інтернованих вояків Армії УНР)* [Ukrainians in Bessarabia and Romania 1921-1923 (Camp and out of camp everyday life of interned army soldiers of the UPR)], in “Русин”, 2017, № 3 (49), с. 130.

In general, researchers note the tolerant attitude of the Romanian authorities towards Ukrainians.<sup>19</sup> In comparison with these facts, the fate of those Ukrainian Cossacks who were captured by the White Guard troops and were on the territories of Turkey and Bulgaria against their will deserves special attention.

The high moral status of the internees in Romania, the presence of a significant number of starshynas in the camps allowed creating a solid foundation for supporting the insurgent movement under the slogans of the UPR in Ukraine. Also, a significant number of Ukrainian Cossacks were at work in Bessarabia, near the Soviet-Romanian border, from time to time carrying out attacks on Red Army troops and Soviet institutions.<sup>20</sup>

### **REALITIES AND DESIDERATA REFLECTED IN THE LETTERS OF THE INTERNED UKRAINIAN MILITARY**

Ukrainians who were captured by the White Guard troops against their will, in particular by the Wrangel Army, were stationed in the “Bernadotte” camp (San Stefano), Sanzhak-Tepe (Hadem Kioi station) in Turkey and in separate camps near Sofia in Bulgaria. Their letters to representatives of the Ukrainian embassy in Turkey and Bulgaria are worthy of attention; they contain an appeal to the Government of the UPR and directly to the Commander-in-Chief Symon Petliura. In their correspondence Ukrainians recall Romania as a country through which some courageous people tried to get to their homeland and escape from the Bulgarian captivity.

I. Sribniak points out that “Ukrainian military emigration in the Balkan countries began to emerge, after the ending of the First World War and the release from the camps of hundreds of thousands of captured and interned Ukrainians, some of whom were in no hurry to travel to their homeland for various reasons. Due to the speed of political events in Ukraine, as well as the fact that the Ukrainian lands in 1919-1921 became the scene of the armed confrontation between White and Red Russia, some of the Ukrainians decided to stay in the country for a temporary stay until “better times.”<sup>21</sup> In our opinion, such a statement is more relevant to those representatives of emigration who took an active part in the events of the Great World War. Instead, the participants at the national revolution in Ukraine from 1917 to 1921 (the days of national liberation struggles) demonstrated a strong desire to return to Ukraine, as evidenced by unpublished archival materials, in particular, their

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<sup>19</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1075, List 2, File 827, P. 56.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> І. Срібняк, *Початки української військової еміграції...*, с. 45.

correspondence with the UPR Government in the exile.

For example, in Turkey, the “Bernadotte” camp was established in San Stefano, where there were many Ukrainians captured by the White Guards. Ukrainians created their own community in the camp, chose I. Forostenko (Hvorostenko) as a leader, and A. Moisiiakha as a secretary. Their assessments of the events were described in a letter to Otaman Kosh of the Zaporizhzhia Low Cossacks and insurgent movements in Katerynoslavshchyna Mr. Rokhiv. On February 25, 1921, one of the letters was sent to the Embassy of the UPR in Istanbul.

***The original language of submitted document was Ukrainian:***

“A circle of Ukrainians of the “Bernadotte” camp at San Stefano February 25, 1921	Embassy of UPR in Tsargrad /Turkey/ to Otaman Kosh of the Low Zaporizhzhia Cossacks and insurgent movements in Katerynoslavshchyna Mr. Rokhiv
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Dear Mr. Otaman,

Allow us to express our sincere gratitude for the fact that, with your arrival to the camp, we were able to address the Chief Otaman of the Ukrainian Republican forces Simon Vasyliovych Petliura with a letter, in which we find out our difficult situation, we will tell about our hopes and wishes and in which we will refer to him as to our native father from Turkish strange land for us: “Father, do you hear my powerful word? “I hear”. We are waiting and we are counting all our hopes on him. You, Mr. Otaman, have long been known as an honest Cossack, and we are certain that you will immediately send our letter to Chief Otaman.

Honourable Mr. Otaman

Symon Vasyliovych!

From a distant foreign land, from Turkey, we are happy to welcome you, our only hope, our advice, the best son and the protector of our own Motherland – Ukraine. The difficult circumstances forced us to live where our grandfathers and great-grandfathers gained the Cossack glory surprisingly to all the baptized people and liberated those who, like we now, were suffering from torment and hard chains in Turkish captivity. There were not the Turks who have captured us, but ours, let me not mention, the recent accomplices – the Russians, who for centuries slaughtered not only our land, our Motherland Ukraine, but our souls. Now our souls and body are shackled with cold chains, there is impenetrable darkness around us and among which only we hear the squawk of a pack of carnivorous crows – the enemies of our Ukraine. It’s cold, severely, and dirty. We are surrounded by enemies, but we hope that you, Mr. Otaman, the son of your native

Ukrainian Motherland, for whose happiness and will you fight, will not forget us slaves and, as glorious Cossacks, you will unleash the chains of our Russian enemies who hunted us down. We pray you to join us to the glorious Cossack army with which we can liberate our native land, our Motherland – Ukraine.

Chairman of the Community I. Forostenko. Secretary A. Moisiiakha.”<sup>22</sup>

A significant number of Ukrainians were in the “Sanzhak-Tepe” camp at Hadem Kioi station. The Head of the Ukrainian community in this camp was Yu. Lebid, and the Secretary was Levchenko. Ukrainians appealed to one of the leaders of the insurgent movement Rokhiv with a request to send their letter to the Head of the UPR S. Petliura.

*The original language of submitted document was Ukrainian:*

“Sanzhak-Tepe” camp  
at Hadem Kioi station /Turkey/  
November 24, 1921  
No. 10

Embassy of the UPR in Tsargorod  
/Turkey/

To Otaman Kosh of the Zaporozhzhia Cossacks  
and the insurgent movements in Katerynoslavshchyna, Mr. Rokhiv.

Dear Mr. Otaman.

We ask you to help us send this letter to our native father, Chief Otaman Symon Vasyliovych Petliura.

We think that your true Cossack heart will be the best application, and our request will be fulfilled by you, because it is known that we turn to you not for the first time, and for this period we know you as the best insurgent Otaman, who has not changed his policy during three-year struggle, and who was always going in the same direction to the way of building up the independence of our Motherland of Ukraine and who always fulfilled all the words that were pronounced. We congratulate you with our sincere heart and send you our best wishes. Hold tight our native yellow-and-blue flag of our Independent Motherland. We are your help. Only your gouk [exhortation, – the authors' refinements] will be enough for all existing people

<sup>22</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, List 2, File 199, Арк 14 «Листи полонених українців з Болгарії та Туреччини до Петлюри про приєднання їх до армії УНР, травень 1921 р.» [Letters from captured Ukrainians from Bulgaria and Turkey to Petliura about joining them to the army of the UPR, May 1921].

at this moment, in very hard physical and even worse moral circumstances, every moment, every hour, to agree, without a single word, again to fight for our disadvantaged area. God and truth are on our side. We will win with his help.

Dear Chief Otaman!

The Ukrainians of the “Sanzhak-Tepe” camp (the one of those camps in which the Wrangel Army is located in Turkey at present) are coming back to you, Dear Otaman, warmly congratulating you on the true Cossack heart and send you the best wishes for your wonderful gigantic work. Such work that we think the whole world has not seen yet, even if we will not make a mistake when we say that it will not be seen in the future, such an energetic man who is so persistent and irreversible, with quiet but strong steps, without any help, being isolated from all the world, with a small [military force, – clarification of missing words], but with a spirit of the loyal sons of our Motherland is going to the target of existence of our Motherland Ukraine.

Do not be surprised, Mr. Otaman, reading these lines. Do not think that these lines are written with some tricks of mind. No ... You are really wrong, our Father, when you come to this opinion, but relying on you, Mr. Chief Otaman, as a brilliant man who has been so carefully educated by our tear-stained Mother Ukraine, we suppose that after reading these lines, your feeling will tell you that they are returning to you certain forces of Ukraine – worthy surnames of the Cossacks.

Yes, Father, yes ... Sorry, we will continue to call you like this, but that is really true. All of us who are returning to you were in the ranks of your native army, at the head of which you stand until the last hour. But the latest events of November 1919 forced us, for various reasons, to leave our dear army. Do not allow God to think that the betrayal of the government of our State has compelled us to leave out the possibility of continuing to fight for our Motherland. You will take great sin, our dear Father, when you are so guessing about your unfortunate children. And who we are who call ourselves your children, but who find ourselves in the hostile army for you.

And here we are, Father... Most of us were captured by Russians in 1919 – some of us were captured after injuries, but there are those who were captured completely healthy. We don't want to be dishonest, because this is not the Ukrainian Cossack's face, and let's say frankly that there are those who were not under the flag of the UPR, but took a large part in the insurgency against the enemies of Ukraine. There are even those who were not at all in our ranks and forcibly served in our hostile Russian army, but all the time they dreamed of getting into their Ukrainian Republican Army. For example, the one who, on behalf of the community, is writing this letter to you, the Honourable Mr. Otaman, was injured and captured near Koziatyn. All the time, from the beginning of the Ukrainian movement, he worked in

its favour for the first time in the Brigade of Otaman Natiiev, till the Hetmanate [before the establishment of the Hetman Skoropadskyi's authority, – clarification of the authors], and after that, in personal Cavalry Division of “Black Zaporozhtsy” of Colonel Diachenko and also in the insurgent detachments of Otaman Rekiiv, whose headquarters was in the village of Chortomyk in Katerynoslav. Having read these lines, you see now who is coming back to you with greetings. So most of us were in the hostile army unintentionally and [did not have anything in common with them, – clarification of the authors].

[...] Only by chance and thanks to various things and circumstances that were not good for us, we were supposed to serve in hostile army, and now we are telling the whole world that we need neither Russia of Trotsky, nor notorious Russia of Denikin. We are really Ukrainian citizens, who by all means support the modern Government of the UPR, headed by Chief Otaman Symon Petliura. This is the government that leads Ukraine to independent existence and which has the only right to speak from Ukrainian citizens to the whole world, because it is supported by the entire Ukrainian people. We do not want to know any Wrangels and their hangers-on Morkotuns, because it is good there for them to solve our national question in the comfortable salons of Paris using Russian money, while our army with the Chief Otaman gives us the best, even his own life, in order to gain freedom and independence of his native area. So, here's what the people's Ukrainian circles say to Mr. Morkotun<sup>23</sup>: “Get out! You are a traitor, and get those

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<sup>23</sup> Morkotun Sergiy Kostiantynovych, famous Ukrainian Mason. His father was a personal physician of the royal family of Romanovs and, besides this, held a high position in the St. Petersburg masonry. Having received the position of the Southwest Railroad Chief of Police, S. Morkotun founded the secret Francophone political organization “Young Ukraine”, to which Symon Petliura and Pavlo Skoropadskyi soon joined. At the same time, he attracted a famous Mason and a poet and artist Maxymilian Voloshyn to work in the movement. Coming to power, in 1918 Hetman Skoropadskyi appointed S. Morkotun as his secretary. He gained a reputation of an educated diplomat, traveled to Berlin for talks with Kaiser Wilhelm, and, using the Masonic government, persuaded Hetman to release the arrested S. Petliura, and later, when the troops entered the Directory, they forbade the prosecution of the overthrown Hetman. In Paris, where S. Morkotun departed in 1919, he created the Ukrainian National Committee, which published the magazine “La Jeune Ukraine”, on behalf of which he participated in negotiations with General P. Wrangel in 1920. S. Morkotun founded the branch from Paris of the Kiev Lodge “The Holy Apostle Andrew”. This branch existed until the end of the 1930's. Consequently, captive Ukrainians frankly did not trust him, because he could greatly serve the king, Hetman Skoropadskyi, he could manipulate with the fate of Petliura, negotiate with Wrangel and then he was suspected for relations with the

who are with you out from our hard but honest way of fighting for the independence of our land. Do not be Judas, because you will choke on the silverware that you get for your work from the Russians.”

Here are the words of the faithful sons of Ukraine, Mr. Otaman. Our main goal is the struggle, the struggle with all those who stand alone and will stand in the way of our common goal. Help us, Honourable Chief Otaman, to get out of the Turkish captivity and the Russian prison. Give us the opportunity again to fight for our unfortunate area. Help us get to our brothers – to the dear army as a head of which you have been working for three years. Not once we applied to your Ambassador in Tsargorod. He already had a good acquaintance with us and promised us to help everyone with everything he can do to get to our brothers, but we have decided also to ask you about this, and we think that You will not leave us here in distant Turkey, but you will help us get to the brothers who stand in the defence of our Government and our homeland. Accept the last congratulations from *three hundred senior officers* and Cossacks of the “Sanzhak-Tepe” camp in Turkey. May God help you on the path of our hard struggle for the very existence of our native land. Greet our brothers, we know they are in difficult situation right now, but let them be patient, we will come to the rescue. Let them not slip out our yellow-blue flag out of their hands, but keep it even stronger in their hands. God and the truth are on our side and this gives us (honest sons of Ukraine) the right to defend our land till death. It is better to die than to go under the yoke of Moscow. Thank you, our glorious Mr. Otaman. Glory to Your Labour!

The faithful sons of Ukraine will never forget the person who first raised the flag with arms in his hands and with the slogan “Long live Independent and Democratic Ukraine. Glory to the Cossacks. Glory to the Government.”

Authorized of the Community, sotnyk Holubiv. Chairman of the Community Yu. Lebid. Secretary Levchenko. Treasurer Grytsenko.

*In accordance with the original:*

Chief of the General Department of the Military camp office

Chief Otaman of the UPR army, poruchik / signature /”.

[Signature is read as Sochynskyi – assumptions of the authors]<sup>24</sup>.

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Soviet authorities. <http://xn--80axedo.xn--j1amh/morkotun-sergiy-kostyantynovich/>;  
<http://onestreet.kiev.ua/morkotun/>

<sup>24</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, List 2, File 199, P. 2 «Листи полонених українців з Болгарії та Туреччини до Петлюри про приєднання їх до армії УНР, травень 1921 р.» [Letters from captured Ukrainians from Bulgaria and Turkey to Petliura about joining them to the army of the UPR, May 1921].

Ukrainians were even in a more difficult situation on the territory of Bulgaria, as they experienced a variety of humiliations on national grounds, being captives of the White Guards. They rallied around the strong spirit of the “Sich” Community and voiced plans to return to Ukraine in an organized manner. Some Cossacks even tried to do it themselves, fleeing from Bulgarian camps, but could not go through Romania.

*The original language of submitted document was Ukrainian:*

“To the Chief Otaman of the UNR troops Symon Vasyliovych Petliura.

Being thrown by misfortune to Bulgaria, we – the Ukrainian rebels, the old members of Sich and the runaways [the fugitives – the authors’ refinements] could not get used to the Russian fugitives, and their leaders, who demanded that we renounced our nationality and forced us to change our passports in Russian to get help from Russian Red Cross. When we asked Americans and Bulgarians to help us set up our own home, Russian speculators from the mission and the Red Cross /Petras-Feldman/ were making obstacles and intrigues all the time. But when we built a pretty white house in the ruin of the barracks without any help, the Americans and Bulgarians saw that Ukrainians were really capable of organization and labour /because they live cleaner than Russians/, they did not believe the Russian intriguers and began, at least Bulgarians, to help us. Having our own house, we are building a workshop /to which the Americans promised to give cars/ to enable our people to rally and not to bow before our enemies<sup>25</sup>.

But as the sun has warmed, the grasslands have become green, the time for insurgence has come, we cannot just sit still, Father, we cannot work, we strive to return to native Ukraine to fight again with cursed riders [attackers, Bolsheviki, – clarification of the authors]. Some more impatient ones tried to go to Ukraine on their own, but they were arrested in Romania; it was told by those who turned back. Father, give us permission to move to our territory [the land, the Motherland, – clarifications of the authors]. We cannot wait when we hear every day that our brothers are fighting there, and we’re wasting time in a foreign land.

In our community was founded “Sich”, which entered the most severe militant element, and who is waiting for permission to go first. Reading the latest version of Universal and your call to us, we are sure that you will accomplish your goal, and call us to you as soon as possible, and not allow us to perish in a foreign country.

Head of the Community Otaman “Sich” Colonel /signature/.

Scribe of the Community V. Zhyvodar, Military Scribe of “Sich” Krupyttskyi.

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<sup>25</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, List 2, File 199. Арк 3.

April 5, 1921, Sofia, No. 78.

In accordance with the original.

Chief of the General Department of the Military camp office

Chief Otaman of the UPR army, poruchik / signature /” [signature is read as K. Shyian, – clarification of the authors]<sup>26</sup>.

Due to correspondence of various diplomatic missions with the Government of the UPR in the exile, the Ukrainian military received a response directly from Symon Petliura, who explained that a quick return to their homeland was impossible under various circumstances. However, in a letter he encouraged them to persevere at combat training, to work on the level of education, to help each other.

*The original language of submitted document was Ukrainian:*

“The suffering sons of the suffering nation,  
Glorious Ukrainian Cossacks!

The terrible fate forced us to leave our native land after a three-and-a-half-year struggle with our original Muscovite enemy for the state independence of our people, for their rights and the will of the hungry, naked and barefoot, without any help from the civilized world – whether it’s a garment, or a medicine for losing blood.

Like our grandfathers, the Cossacks who fought for the liberation of their people and the land, we have to wander the lands of others, suffering from hunger and cold, and endure severe anguish over the native steppes, huts and land which was watered by bloody sweat of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

It even more oppresses us, even more painfully compresses the pain of the heart, with the thought that our native enemy, the Muscovite, now dominates in our land, that hundreds of thousands of our best people, our fathers, sisters and sons, are being exported by the Russians to distant Siberia and to the far and the cold Murmansk Peninsula and thousands of Muscovites migrate instead to Ukraine.

We were thrown everywhere in the world by evil fate: to Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Turkey, and even to distant Egypt. ... We are everywhere, and as our martyrs and grandparents said, we are there “where the ravens do not bring bones”.

Tens of thousands of us, who were the Ukrainian Republican Army, led by myself and the Government of the UPR, are now in Poland, we know about you, being in other lands, and expect only a reasonable time to gather together, for all of us to get together and go together to free our Mother [Ukraine, – clarification of the authors] from captivity.

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

You know, glorious Cossacks, that if we were able to gather all together, then we would have had already divided both sorrow and need together for a long time. It's a hard time now and it's impossible for us to get together, even at least at one land, but we believe that such a time will come and it is already close<sup>27</sup>.

I and the UPR Government are taking all measures in the direction of connecting all of us scattered abroad, and in particular, about material assistance. But you know how hard it is for a miserable man to get something..

Belief in our fair deeds, our blood is shed across the rivers throughout Ukraine, realization that they are thinking about us in Ukraine, they are waiting for us there, sending messengers with news to our Government, and a guarantee that we have not long left to wait, the time is close when "blood of the enemy will flow in the Black Sea" and "slave children will pray in liberty" [lines from the poems of T. Shevchenko, – clarification of the authors].

Meanwhile, all of us, starting with the Cossack and ending with the highest senior, need to learn and study. We must be prepared to create a new, big, strong and rich Ukraine on the ruins. It is necessary that we return to our native land as educated, cultured, and prepared for the work of state building citizens. Struggle, equip senior and junior schools, courses and schools for illiterates, and professional schools and courses [for military training, – clarification of the authors].

Any illiterate should not return to Ukraine! Starshyna! A great task and responsibility for your subordinate Cossack are laid on you in front of our Motherland.

On behalf of the troops of the UPR staying in Poland and Ukraine, thank the brothers outside of these lands for sending greetings to me from the "Sanzhak-Tepe" camp /Turkey/, "Bernadotte" /in the city of San Stefano, Turkey/, and the community "Sich" in Sofia /Bulgaria/. In particular, in the name of the troops, I thank the Head of the circle of Ukrainians of the Bernadotte camp, Mr. I. Forostenko and the Secretary of this community, Mr. A. Moisiikh, the Head of the community of the Sanzhak-Tepe camp, Mr. Yu. Lebid, and members of the council of this community, Levchenko and Grytsenko and the authorized of the community sotnyk Golubiv and the Head of the Sofia Sich, Colonel Filonovych and scribes, V. Zhyvodar and Krupytskyi. The greetings were transmitted to the attention of all the troops. Glory to the Free and Independent Ukrainian People's Republic. Glory to its knightly army.

April 19, 1921 was signed by the Chief Otaman of the UPR Petliura.

The Chief of the Military Office of the Chief Otaman Vyhovskyi affirmed.

In accordance with the original:

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<sup>27</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, List 2, File 199. P. 7.

Chief of the General Office of the Chancellery, poruchik /signature/.<sup>28</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

From the published documents, we know for sure that captive Ukrainians were not so much troubled by the Turkish or Bulgarian bondage as the humiliation of the Russian military from the Russian mission of the Red Cross. They always encountered intrigues and obstacles. In an effort to rebuild their homes in internment camps, they actually isolated themselves from the numerous White Guard armies. And only endurance, hard work, good faith proved Romanians, Bulgarians and Turks, that Ukrainians who were captured by Russians were another population, another nation, the people with a different type of thinking. Russian White Guard officers were forced to renounce their own convictions and nationality, but the Ukrainian military stood up. Also, we would like to emphasize that when the Romanian authorities contributed to the placement of Ukrainian military forces outside the camps, it was much more difficult to settle in the Turkish territory. As it was indicated in the Ukrainian diary "Freedom" on August 9, 1935: "Two communities of the former Ukrainian military united into one in 1927 in Turkey. The first community under the name of the Initiative Circle was led by the sotnyk Mykola Zabyla, the second – the Tsargorod Council. The community continued to operate under the slogan "For native land!" It became an independent, national, illegal organization. The community consisted of representatives of Ukrainian communities of Chernihiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, Cossacks from the units of Katerynoslav, Chernomorshchyna, Tavria and Crimea. The goal was mutual support, training, burial of the dead and an appeal to Turkish government officials to help them find a job. Only during those years, it was banned in Turkey to provide work to non-citizens of the country, so there was a problem of the choice of citizenship. Some former military men had not been properly working for more than a year, but they did not give up their citizenship<sup>29</sup>. Despite the fact that, due to the establishment of the Soviet power in Ukraine, participants in the national liberation events of 1917-1921 could not return to their homeland, even though they were begging in foreign countries, they still did not give up their nationality.

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<sup>28</sup> ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, List 2, File 199, P. 8 «Листи полонених українців з Болгарії та Туреччини до Петлюри про приєднання їх до армії УНР, травень 1921 р.» [Letters from captured Ukrainians from Bulgaria and Turkey to Petliura about joining them to the army of the UPR, May 1921].

<sup>29</sup> *Життя українців в Туреччині* [The life of Ukrainians in Turkey], in "Свобода" [Freedom], 9 серпня 1935 р., № 184, с. 3.

урток українців  
табору "Бернадот"  
при м. Сан-Отефано  
5 лютого 1921 р.

Посольство У.Н.Р. у Царьгороді / Копія / Туреччина /

Отаману Коша Низових Запоризьких козаки  
і повстанчеських рухів на Катеринославщині  
п.Реківу.

Шановний Пане Отамане.

Дозвольте Вам висловити щирю подяку за те, що своїм приїздом до табору дали можливість нам звернутись до Головного Отамана Українських Республіканських військ Симона Васильовича Петлюри в листі, в якому ми в'яснюємо наше тяжке становище, скажемо про свої надії і побажання і в якому ми Отаману, як рідному батькові в Турецькій чужій нам землі рукнемо: "чуєш, батьку...ого могутнього слова "Чуєш" ми чекаємо і на нього покладаємо всі надії. Вас, пане Отамане, ми давно знаємо, як чесного козака і певні, що Ви негайно надішлете нам того листа до Головного Отамана.

Вельмишановний Пане Отамане,  
Симон Васильовичу.

В далекої чужої землі, - в Туреччині ми маємо частя Вас вітати, єдину нашу надію, нашу пораду, найкращого сина і захистника нашої рідної Неньки - України. Тяжкі обставини примусили нас жити там, де діди наші і прадіди добували славу козацьку на диво всьому хрещеному люду і визволяли тих котрі, як і ми тепер, страждали в мурах і тяжких кайданах в Турецькій неволі. Не турки нас заневолити, а ті наші, боцарі не згадувати недавні спільники - росіяне, котрі нікамі шмагували не тільки наш край, нашу неньку Україну, а і наші душі. Зараз наші душі і тіло окуті холодними кайданами, навкруги непросвітня темрява серед якої чути тільки клекіт зграйких воронів - ворогів нашої України. Холодно, тяжко, брудно. Кругом оточили нас вороги, але ми маємо надію, що Ви, Пане Отамане, син рідної Неньки - України за частя і волю якої Ви боретесь, не забудете і нас невольників і, як славетні запорожці розкуєте ланцюги якими скували нас наші вороги росіяне. Благаємо. скоріше нас приєднати до славетного війська козацького, з яким ми підемо визволяти наш рідний край, нашу Неньку - Україну.

Голова громади І.Форостенко. Секретарь А.Мойсіяха.

З оригіналом згідно:

Начальник Загального Відділу Військово - Похідної Канцелярії Головного Отамана Війська У.Н.Р.,  
Поручник

**Figure no. 1.** The letter from the community of Ukrainians of the "Bernadotte" camp to the Embassy of the Ukrainian People's Republic in Tsargrad (Constantinople) of February 25, 1921 [ЦДАВО, Fond 1078, Оп. 2, Спр. 199, Арк. 14.]